

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY: S/S:RKUCHEL

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY CARACAS IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 000014

NODIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT GEORGETOWN 2227 ACTION SECSTATE DTD 31 DEC

QTE

S E C R E T GEORGETOWN 2227

NODIS

DEPT PLS PASS CARACAS IF DESIRED

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY ROGERS FROM AMBASSADOR

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR MOPS CU GY AO

SUBJ: CUBAN MILITARY INTERVENTION IN ANGOLA: VENEZUELAN DEMARCHE

REF: A. STATE 305226; B. GEORGETOWN 2220; C. STATE 303982;

D. CARACAS 13503; E. STATE 304964

1. ACTING FONMIN JACK RECEIVED ME ALONE AT 1130

DEC 31. WITH YOUR TELEGRAM (REFTEL A) IN MY HAND

IN ORDER TO IMPRESS JACK THAT WHAT I SAID REFLECTED

RATHER PRECISE INSTRUCTIONS, I PARAPHRASED THE TELEGRAM

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ALMOST COMPLETELY. HAVING SEEN BEFOREHAND REFTEL

D, I OMITTED SPECIFICALLY THE FINAL SENTENCE OF PARA 2 OF YOUR INSTRUCTION, SINCE OUR NOTE REQUESTED VENEZUELAN INTERCESSION WITHOUT ANY QUALIFICATION.

2. WHEN I FINISHED, JACK SAID THIS MESSAGE WAS A GREAT RELIEF TO HIM AND WOULD BE TO HIS GOVT. AS I HAD INTRODUCED THE SPECIFIC MENTION OF VENEZUELA BY SAYING THAT WE WISHED TO BE CLEAR ABOUT THE SOURCE OF OUR INFORMATION, JACK THEN SAID THAT HE WANTED ME TO UNDERSTAND THAT HE WAS NOT CONFIRMING THAT THEIR INFORMATION CAME FROM THE SAME SOURCE. I LET THIS DROP FOR THE TIME BEING, BUT TOWARD THE CLOSE OF OUR CONVERSATION I REVERTED TO THE QUESTION BY NOTING THAT HIS UNDERSTANDABLE RELUCTANCE TO IDENTIFY THE SOURCE OF THEIR INFORMATION LEFT US WITH TWO POSSIBLE PROBLEMS. ON ONE HAND WE MIGHT BE DOING A DISSERVICE TO OUR VENEZUELAN FRIENDS IF INDEED THEY WERE NOT THE SOURCE OF THE OBSERVATIONS WHICH GAVE HIS GOVT CONCERN. BY THE SAME TOKEN, IF THE SOURCE OF THE ALLEGATIONS ABOUT US INTENTIONS WERE NOT VENEZUELAN, THERE WOULD BE STILL FURTHER PROBLEM FOR US TO IDENTIFY WHERE SUCH MISCHIEVOUS STATEMENT ORIGINATED. JACK ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THIS PUT THE MATTER IN A DIFFERENT LIGHT AND SAID HE WOULD CONSULT AND BE IN TOUCH WITH ME LATER.

3. AS MTO THE PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF OUR HAVING SPOKEN TO GUYANA OFFICIALLY, I HANDED JACK A COPY OF REFTEL C TO LET HIM SEE FOR HIMSELF THE CONTEXT IN WHICH THE QUESTION WAS PUT TO STATE DEPT SPOKESMAN. JACK SEEMED TO BE SATISFIED WITH THIS AND YOUR EXPLANATION, AND ONLY REMARKED THAT HE TRIED TO AVOID THE PRESS LIKE THE PLAGUE SINCE NEWSMEN ALWAYS CREATE PROBLEMS.

4. AS I MIGHT HAVE EXPECTED, JACK ALSO REVERTED TO THE WELL-KNOWN THEME OF SOUTH AFRICAN INVOLVEMENT IN ANGOLA. AFTER EXPLAINING GUYANA'S STRONG FEELING ON THIS SUBJECT, HE ASKED IF THERE WASN'T SOME WAY THE US COULD BRING ITS INFLUENCE TO BEAR ON GOVT OF SOUTH AFRICA TO WITHDRAW ITS TROOPS. I SAID

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WE HAD GONE SO FAR IN CONDEMNING APARTHEID AND SUPPORTING MEASURES TO BRING IT TO AN END, THAT OUR RELATIONS WITH SOUTH AFRICA WERE SOMEWHAT DISTANT AND COOL AND I DOUBTED WE HAD THE KIND OF LEVERAGE WHICH WOULD ENABLE US TO BE USEFUL IN THIS CONNECTION. I HANDED HIM A CLIPPING FROM THE PARIS INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE WHICH INDICATED SOUTH AFRICA PUBLICLY OFFERED TO WITHDRAW ITS TROOPS FROM ANGOLA IF THE SOVIET

UNION AND CUBA WERE TO DO LIKEWISE. I ASKED IF GUYANA AND ITS PARTNERS IN THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT, PARTICULARLY THE AFRICANS, COULDN'T VISUALIZE THIS AS AN OPENING FOR THE KIND OF STEP BY STEP DIPLOMACY THAT SECY KISSINGER EMPLOYED SO EFFECTIVELY IN BRINGING ABOUT THE PRESENT ARMISTICE AND WITHDRAWAL OF TROOPS BY ISRAEL AND EGYPT. I ADDED THAT IT SEEMED TO ME THAT ONE WAY TO PROCEED WOULD BE FOR A REPRESENTATIVE GROUP OF THE NON-ALIGNED TO ASK THE CUBANS IN THE FIRST INSTANCE AND EVENTUALLY THE SOVIET UNION IF THEY WOULD BE WILLING TO AGREE TO SIMULTANEOUS WITHDRAWAL UNDER SUPERVISION BY THE UN OR THE OAU. JACK SEEMED TO GET THE POINT BUT DIDN'T SEEM TERRIBLY ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THE IDBR.

5. IN DEALING WITH THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE VENEZUELANS AS THE PROBABLE SOURCE OF GUYANA CONCERN, I GAVE JACK ASSURANCE THAT IN THE EVENT THEY COULD SEE THEIR WAY CLEAR TO CONFIRMING OUR SUPPOSITION, THE US WOULD OBVIOUSLY GUARANTEE THAT THIS INFORMATION WOULD BE HANDLED WITH THE UTMOST DISCRETION AND TACT SINCE WE WOULD WANT AT ALL COSTS TO AVOID EMBARRASSMENT TO EITHER (SIC) OF OUR GOOD FRIENDS.

6. I TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THE OCCASION TO GIVE MINISTER JACK THE SUBSTANCE OF THE LATEST UP-TO-DATE NEWS ON CUBAN MILITARY INTERVENTION MENTIONED IN REFTEL E.

7. FINALLY, I SHOWED MINISTER JACK A REUTERS FILE SLUGGED 0700 DEC 31 WHICH QUOTED AN INFORMED SOURCE AS SAYING LAST NIGHT GOG WILL PERMIT CUBAN PLANES BOUND FOR ANGOLA TO USE LOCAL AIRPORT FACILITIES, ADDING SOURCE ALLEGED CUBAN REQUEST CAME TO GUYANA
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AFTER BARBADOS PROTEST. ITEM ALSO STATED ACCORDING TO SOURCE TYAT GOG STATEMENT LIKELY IN NEXT FEW DAYS. TO MY QUERY WHETHER HE COULD COMMENT JACK SAID TO BEST OF HIS KNOWLEDGE, WHICH HE REGARDED AS UP-TO-DATE, THERE HAD BEEN NO REQUEST FROM CUBA, AND HE SAID BEYOND THAT I WAS ALREADY AWARE THAT PRIMIN BURNHAM HAS TAKEN POSITION HE WILL CONSIDER AND ACT ONLY WHEN AND IF A REQUEST IS MADE.
KREBS UNQTE
ROBINSON

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NNN

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